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ral ants carrying what he supposed to be large stones into their nests, on closer examination these proved to be a large species of *Coccus*. A specimen of this insect was about the one-fourth of an inch long and the one-fifth of an inch broad, of a pale pinkish hue. The body, independent of the head, exhibited ten segments, of which the thoracic ones possessed short limbs ending in a single, black, curved unguis. The anterior pair of limbs were twice the size of the others. The antennæ were fuscous and eight-jointed. The source of the coccus was sought in the vicinity of the fornicary, but not found. *Opuntia* grew abundantly in the neighborhood, but no cocci were upon it.

*On a Stone Axe.*—Mr. JOHN FORD presented fifteen species of fossil land and fresh-water shells, all of the quaternary period, a stone axe or celt, a sample of Lignite, and a bone, belonging to the genus *Canis*.

These were collected by himself and a friend in a cutting for a roadway made through the outer bluff on the margin of the Mississippi River, a short distance northwest of Alton, Ill. The axe, which is somewhat unique in form, has an especial interest, owing to the peculiar conditions attending its discovery. The roadway referred to is about twenty-five feet in width, forming a sort of terrace running parallel with the river, but some fifty feet above it. From the outer edge of this the bluff slopes to the water, while the inner edge is flanked by an escarpment composed entirely of natural deposits left *in situ* by the workmen. In height the latter is about equal to the width of the cutting, thus making the whole vertical measurement from the present surface of the river to the top of the bluff some seventy-five feet. It was in the face of this perpendicular wall, from three to five feet above the roadway, and twenty feet below the summit, that all the specimens under consideration were found.

The presence of land and fresh-water shells may be accounted for on the theory of deposition at a time when the Mississippi, or what is more probable, a great fresh-water lake covered that portion of the country, at an elevation much higher than the present river surface. The waves of this lake, dashing against the loftier limestone bluffs that still remain unaltered a few rods further inland, doubtless threw down myriads of land shells. This same force brought in large quantities of fresh-water shells, and these, mingling with the others, aided in forming the vast pile of debris of which the outer bluff is principally composed. The same theory may explain the presence of the wolf bone and Lignite, but it can reveal little or nothing in regard to the axe. The wall referred to presented in every part a solid front, without fissure or crevice, everywhere hard and impenetrable, except by pick or crowbar, and yet, twenty feet under the surface, within this stony matrix deposited by water thousands of years ago, laid the evi-

dence of the presence of the man of the period, a stone axe artistically made and doubtless used for purposes of battle. When or how it was buried is as much a mystery as is the history of its maker. Whether it was dropped from a canoe into the accumulating debris, or hurled from the land at a passing enemy, is a problem which cannot be solved; but that it had lain for unnumbered centuries in the sepulchre from which it was exhumed, there are abundant reasons to believe.

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NOVEMBER 20.

The President, Dr. RUSCHENBERGER, in the chair.

Thirty-six members present.

*Correction of "Notes on American Cretaceous Fossils."*—The following note, dated Porto Plata, San Domingo, Oct. 15, 1877, was received from Mr. WM. M. GABB:—

"In my paper on cretaceous fossils in the Proceedings for 1876, of which I have just received a copy, I find that, by some unaccountable mistake the genus *Volutifusus*, Conrad, is placed in the sub-family *Voluntinæ*, after *Rostellites* (p. 290), where it does not belong, as well as in the *Scaphellinæ*, where it should be (p. 291), and where I intended it should go, as is amply proven by the first paragraph on the following page, where I say 'I am by no means convinced that *Volutifusus* should be separated from *Scaphella*,' which it follows on p. 291. I do not pretend to explain or excuse this inadvertence, but desire to put the correction on record. I also note the following errata: In last line of page 289 for 'bi cit.' read 'loc. cit.;' page 279, line 14 from top, for 'larger' read 'longer;' page 305 under *P. elliptica* for 'seven' read 'my;' page 309, line 22 from bottom, for '*Pseudocardia*' read '*Protocardia*.'"

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NOVEMBER 27.

The President, Dr. RUSCHENBERGER, in the chair

Thirty-eight members present.

A paper entitled "On the Alkali from the vicinity of Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory," by Edw. Goldsmith, was presented for publication.

*Remarks on the American Species of Diffugia.*—Prof LEIDY remarked that the genus *Diffugia* was first described by Leclerc, in 1815, and was founded on three forms, of which one is referred by Ehrenberg to his *D. proteiformis*, and the others to *D. acumi-*